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THE WAR AND EDUCATION

By

ANDREW F. WEST

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THE WAR AND EDUCATION

ADDRESSES

BY

ANDREW F. WEST

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Together with a Translation of the War Address of
M. Lafferre, Minister of the French Republic
for Public Instruction and the Fine Arts

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON
LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1919

Edc 153.9.30

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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
Princeton, N. J.

Published 1919
Printed in the United States of America

NOTE

Four of the addresses, here printed with slight additions, were previously published in the *Educational Review*, in *School and Society* or in the *The Evening Post.*

PREFACE

These addresses are collected in the hope they may help to keep the educational lessons of the war in vivid remembrance. It seems incredible that men should ever forget them. Yet many will do so as soon as the storm drifts away. Our American schooling has been weaker on the side of memory than in some other directions, so that it has become only too easy to forget. If through failure to perceive and remember, we fail to embody the teaching of the war in our education, the loss to our nation will be enormous, because we shall lose the one new impulse which can both save and strengthen our entire schooling from beginning to end. That new impulse is the powerful revival of the belief in discipline and duty, as opposed to all sordid or sentimental theories. If it is forgotten or ignored, our schools and colleges will sink lower.

It was a profound truth which Anatole France put in those perfect words which picture the little deserted village thinking of her absent sons fighting for France: *"Ils passent; mais je reste pour*

garder leur souvenir. Je suis leur mémoire. C'est pourquoi ils me doivent tout, car l'homme n'est l'homme que parce qu'il se souvient."[1]

[1] Sur la voie glorieuse, Paris, 1915, p. 52.

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OUR EDUCATIONAL BIRTHRIGHT

OUR EDUCATIONAL BIRTHRIGHT

While we are here to-day, thinking and talking of education, perhaps we are only half aware how nearly, in the vast world outside, the best things of civilization, the dearest hopes of mankind, are face to face with the deadly peril of quick and overwhelming disaster. And that disaster, if accomplished, puts back the clock a thousand years. In the whirl of that cataclysm Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence would be blown away as merely two more "scraps of paper."

In this crisis, it is no time, either in the great outer world of war or in the lesser and inner formative world of educational preparation for life, for any wild theorizing, any panic-stricken clutching at this or that novelty, makeshift or panacea to help us, or for confused and unsteady thinking of any sort. It is the time for steady vision, straight thinking, search for the really durable things, deep deliberation, and then, as soon as we see the truth in new clearness, for a prompt, vigorous and universal obedience to it in action. For only those who are willing to be ruled by the actual, living, indestructible truth

can ever be made fit to be free or to be of real use in this or any other time of the world's need.

The war is changing much and changing it rapidly. We are being hurried along. Whither? Already we are aware that we are in a new age. The End of the World happened over three years ago. A New World is here. A Judgment of the Nations has begun. The supposedly educated man who does not know this is mentally and morally defective. So far as he has influence he does harm. He belongs with the "subnormals."

What are the things we can already see are changing? and into what are they changing? What are the things, if any, that are not changing? These are the three momentous questions we must know how to answer if we are to be fit for our present duty as civilized men, especially if we are to be fit to take part in guiding the education of our youth so that they may be ready for their part when the load falls on their shoulders. This, it seems to me, is now the one supreme duty of all who care that our education shall be of help to our land in this time of fierce trial, soon to grow fiercer, and in the happier days we hope to see when the storm has passed. Here is "our

bit," and a big "bit" to do, and to do now in the cause of national preparedness. The new army of the young recruits of knowledge, few of them now well-trained, some half-trained, most of them untrained, must be all trained and well-trained—and without more ado or delay. Are we ready for this? Do we see the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? see it clearly? see it soon enough? and see it together? If not, we shall deserve to be cursed. But if we do, we may give quick and powerful help at a time when such help, though late, is still in time to save.

What are the things that are changing? O so many of them! and changing so fast! None of us can see them all now. Perhaps none of us can ever see them all. But with the fourth year of the war on, and its end not yet in sight, there has been time to see the chief lines and directions of the changes which are still shaping themselves before our eyes. Let us look at those which affect or ought to affect our education most powerfully.

The first is a change in our attitude, a new aversion to self-indulgence, indifference, idleness, caprice and pleasure. We had been drifting too long amidst these things, like beings with juvenile minds in adult bodies.

> Behold the child! by nature's kindly law
> Pleased with a feather, tickled with a straw.

"Nature's law"—for infants, but not for men. All Americans of intelligence who love their country more than their own ease, many of whom had been easy-going or inert before, are awake now. They see, in truer light, that these things are enemies of our land. We can stand outer assault, but not the inner softness of decay. The only question remaining is: Will they act now on what they see? If so, a great and lasting change for good in our education is assured. The idler, the slacker, the sloucher, the careless, the listless, the reckless, those who have been trooping in multitudes along the "line of least resistance" away from irksome duty, scattering among the various primrose paths on the way down-hill, will then halt and stand erect once more, listening for the call that shall tell them where they ought to go. "Do what you like" and "do what you please," in studies as in conduct, will then be discarded as a Devil's motto. How this will hit the officers and leaders of education who have encouraged the weaker instincts of the ignorant, have played the politician, have thought more of their jobs than of their duty, and have commer-

cialized and sold like traffickers the sacred things of truth! It is time to drive the moneychangers from the Temple of Knowledge. Whenever parents really want this done, it will be done. And the sooner the better.

The second change is a slowly forming change of positive purpose. The first change of aversion to the weaker tendencies of immature minds, old or young, is wholly good, but being primarily a negative reaction, is not enough to build on. Something more is needed, and something more is beginning to happen. When we turn away from the things that harm, it is of course the first needed step. As Horace wrote long ago of Virtue: "The first step is to avoid Vice." But only the first step. The second step, without which the first step leads us nowhere and may leave us ready to turn back the wrong way again, is to start toward and keep on toward the things that help and strengthen. The first means "About face!"; the second means "Forward march!" We are taking the first step—facing right—in greater numbers every day and month. Can we take the second? If so, we shall win—win in making our boys and girls into the finest men and women, fit for our country's need. If not,

we shall fail, and fail not only in the time of greatest danger, but of the greatest opportunity this generation shall ever have. It is hard, no doubt—and yet supremely well worth doing. And to real men and women difficulty is merely another name for opportunity. If we are real men and women, we shall go straight ahead on this path, no matter what lions stand in the way. It would be interesting, if time allowed, to name some of the lions. Some of them are outside us. We need not fear these. Some, strangely enough, are inside—the most dangerous of all. They must be tamed or killed.

What is the newly wakened positive impulse which shows us that this second step is the great step to take? and that, as we go on, we shall always be surely on the right road? For this is the whole matter. Settle this, and questions of studies will settle themselves. It is not so much: How far are we going? or How fast are we going? but On what road are we going? How true the great word of Descartes on education now appears:

> It is better to go a short distance on the right road, than a long distance on the wrong road.

Let us go as far as we can, of course. But let

all who are in any way discouraged by their lack of travelling strength take heart if they are really going, even slowly, even with stumbling, even for only a short distance—yet on the right road. How I wish every boy and girl in Pennsylvania and outside might pluck up courage at this thought. *Initium dimidium facti*—"the beginning is half of the whole," "well begun, half done"—and the harder half too; these are the ever-old, ever-new words of cheer and good sense for the weakest boy or girl in school who at least wants to go right.

Again we ask: What is the newly wakened positive impulse which is the basis for all our new educational hopes? It is the revival in might of the ideas of discipline and duty, the growing conviction that education is not the strolling here and there of multitudes of stragglers, but the orderly advance of great armies to a known objective. Have we not seen it beginning? almost as soon as the first bugles blew?—as our sons rose up to judge us, standing erect and enduring sharp discipline, all over the land—offering their young strength and lives to save us—bravely, gaily, gloriously. Have we not seen it as our daughters turned in myriads to "stand and wait"

in the hospitals and prepared to carry their self-effacing heroism to tend our sons in the battle-lines? Have we not seen it in the self-imposed discipline now spreading all over the land? saving food and clothing and all necessary things, giving up all we can in time and work and money, doing it steadily and gladly, and all on one combined exacting plan. We are coming together at last. *E pluribus unum* again rings true.

It is the old American spirit at last awakening again, the spirit which made and saved our freedom—never, please God, again to go to sleep. Obedience, not to what we like or do not like to do, but to what we ought to do, be it hard or easy, this is what is now awaking in full might. If we heed it, it will purify, unify and invigorate our schools for generations to come. It will give us the power to base all our education on the one indestructible truth on which alone education can be built. So great is the opportunity our present difficulty brings us. Can we take it?

Yes, these changes, if they spread far enough and go deep enough, will, of course, bring many other changes in their train. They will compel us to restudy our schools and colleges. In our

theory of studies, as well as of life, we shall have to abandon, once for all, many specious theories and alluring practices to which we have recently been indulgent. The captivating notion, happily now going out of vogue, that the student in school or college should study what he likes, when he likes, as he likes, if he likes, must be "interned or interred." To all so-called "free elective systems," which are not systems at all, we must promptly say "good-bye" and "good riddance." In place of all this must come the conviction that so far as practicable in view of each student's age, capacities and future life-work, the few fundamentals of universal value for training—not for tickling—the human mind should be the basis for all courses of study until the student is both sufficiently trained in power and is also made aware of his ascertained aptitudes. Then he should be left to choose for himself. In this way, as in no other, may our youth be advanced at least a sufficient distance on the right road to make it their own sole responsibility, and not ours, if they then choose to go a long way, a short way, or any way on any wrong road. This also means that if schools and colleges do not know enough to come to a fair agreement on the fundamental

studies (no room for politics here! inside or out) and to distribute them so that no essential is lost in any curriculum, meanwhile giving everything its true label—thus making every course of study sound in itself as well as easily recognizable, and all of them together, from bottom to top in every kind of education, standing for the harmonious unity in variety of the knowledge most valuable for training and informing the human mind—if they can not effect this with a fair amount of clearness, they can not make their case clear to the country, and will give evidence that they do not know their own business. And in arranging studies it must never be forgotten that to put intellectually inferior or loosely disjointed forms of education on a par in competition with the nobler forms is to drive out the best education. Such a course will reduce our land in this respect to a condition of dependent provincial mediocrity, by cutting off from the boys and girls of unusual promise a good chance to proceed—not a little way, nor half way, but all the way on the right road. A democracy without this chance well safeguarded and cherished is not a true democracy in education. This is the heart of the matter. Can we give our education vital unity and

thereby gain immensely increased power for the cause of knowledge, truth, justice and the best things of human life? Not without clear agreement, not without the cooperation which springs from the unifying impulse of discipline and duty, not without the power to overcome chaotic disintegration by a definite organization in which the individual will be willing to sacrifice or postpone some of his immature inclinations, harmless or perhaps even useful to him if he were the only one to consider, for the sake of the lasting good he will gain by common training in the essentials of knowledge. We do not need more studies, but fewer studies and more study. This is the one way to be thorough in our intellectual "preparedness." What we need is simplicity rather than a miscellany; the sustaining diet of the home table, rather than the confusing variety of the whole market; the things of central value first, and such of the rest as we like—afterwards.

This means a lot of work to do—a great house cleaning in which loads and loads of trash shall be swept out and carted away as junk. For most of our people it means we must provide genuine, not foolish, vocational training, together with and not apart from real elementary schooling. The

secondary education in our high schools and academies should begin two years earlier. Here, at the present time, is the place of greatest waste. We are the only important western nation with so short a period as four years for this stage of instruction. Make it six, and the good results will be doubled. That is, they will be doubled if the programmes are organized, in a very few types, on the basis of training the mind in essentials, rather than in the loose and confusing way which is still so common. And all loose, vague and shifting plans of college studies must "go." It also means that good teaching is something more than talking. Never mind what some of the psychologists tell us about "interest" and the absurdity of "formal discipline." Intellectual discipline, if worth anything at all, can not be "informal" or casual or happy-go-lucky. However, if we are awake to the meaning of the war, we need not worry much about "formal" discipline. It will take care of itself and discipline its critics too. And if we are not awake, nothing can save us. History will then prepare to write our epitaph among those who failed—failed to take their one great chance,

> The tide in the affairs of men
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

The tide is flooding fast to-day.

I have tried to show sharply, first, what things are changing among us and, second, into what they are changing. Lastly, then, what things, if any, are not changing? Are there any? Yes. The laws of nature still hold sway. The law of gravitation is good for some time to come and so far as man can see, for all time to come. The tides still swing. The seasons pass in their ancient order. "Day unto day, night unto night" —follow on the same as ever. The sun sets, the dews fall, the stars shine. The animals seem much the same. The bee still fills its honey-cup, the lark has not lost her song, the leopard keeps his spots. It is we, not they, who are seen to be changing—changing in our recent attitude and purpose. Otherwise, we too, though no doubt developing, remain of the same nature as we were; human in our good and evil, naturally doing now right and now wrong, ever rising or falling as we follow or fail to follow the best light we have—the light of truth, which alone shows the way to freedom. Truth is still at heart simple, clear, convincing, and error is still at heart tortuous,

malign, confusing. A lie is still mean. Treachery is still base. Lust and cruelty, the twin vices, are still detestable. Wisdom is still "better than riches" or pleasure or station or fame. Its price is still "above rubies" and all the lesser values of life. These are things that do not and can not change, or be disbelieved, unless moral chaos is to follow.

What else does not change? The law of the mind. To know truth and especially the truths that underlie all knowledge and form the base for all sound opinion, to express that knowledge well, and to use all with wisdom in the guidance of life—these are still the marks of the best intellectual excellence. Experience alone still convincingly reveals the relative worth of studies. Follow it. Is reason worth having? Is memory worth having? Are the treasures of knowledge worth having? Is a well-trained mind worth having? Then train it well and use it in full power. Is the newly wakened conviction of discipline and duty one we are willing to follow? Then believe it, believe it and follow it—no matter how hard the effort, no matter if we get on only a short way at first, at least satisfied to find our feet are on the right road. The going will be better soon.

Here is where faith and knowledge join—faith leading the way. The light may be dim and distant now—but it will brighten as we go on. No doubt it is a day of trouble and alarm, *Der Tag* indeed, but not the Day the atheist cynics feign. It is a "great and notable Day of the Lord," in whose sight are all days and ages. We do not know its inmost meaning. If we knew it all, we should be more than men. But we know enough to help us to believe more than we know, and thus at least to do what we believe to be our part. Who of us can fail now to learn our lesson? It is time, high time, to realize in matters of education the stern responsibility that rests on us for what our students study, how they study and why they study, to substitute the disciplined for the undisciplined mind, the trained for the untrained, self-sacrifice for self-indulgence, so that all for whom we must give account shall be well prepared to play their part. The law of the mind, like the moral law, is the true glory of man. For a man to obey that law is to earn his freedom and to help save the freedom of the world. This is something higher than all "practical efficiency." In it alone is the guiding wisdom which must control and purify everything, "efficiency" included,

the one force that can win a lasting victory for truth and freedom.

> Three roots hold up Dominion;—
> Knowledge, Power. These twain are strong,
> But stronger still the third—Obedience.
> 'Tis the tap-root still,
> Wrapped round the rock of Duty far below,
> That bids defy to all the winds that blow.

THE IMMORTAL CONFLICT

THE IMMORTAL CONFLICT

I

A boy without a memory can not be educated. A man without a memory needs some one to look after him, or he will go on repeating his mistakes, because he is always forgetting what he needs to remember, namely, that it is not the man who makes a mistake, but the man who repeats his mistakes, who is known for a fool. And a nation without a memory is in the same deplorable plight. To remember well the things that ought to be remembered and to profit by them is the rule for a safe, strong and wise life for every man and for every nation.

The past is not something dead and gone. Whether men care to have anything to do with it or not, it remains a fact that the past has a great deal to do with us. Our parents and our parents' parents may be physically dead and gone; but without them we would not have been what we are and, indeed, would not be here today. Whatever has happened is a fact as inevitable as what now happens or as what will happen. The past is the

parent, the producing cause of the present. Science has taught us by a thousand proofs that the universe is what it is because of what it was and that men are what they are now because of what men were before. And the big book of history, which is the world's memory, points the one "moral of all human tales" in revealing the truth that, no matter what else has changed, the human heart is still swayed by the same passions as ever. To learn well this lesson and never to forget it in the conduct of life, personal and national, is the one foundation for a sane education.

And now, when the world seems turned upside down, men need to remember these elementary and elemental unchanging realities. For there are voices of confusion telling us that everything is changing, saying that little, if anything, of what we have held as true can be depended on for the future, and bidding us clutch at this or that panacea as the only thing to cure our ills. The past, they say, has little to teach us; for we are Americans of the twentieth century and should promptly cut loose from bygone times, methods and ideas and set up a brand-new national culture of our own. In their rejection of what they call "tradition," they are forgetting some-

thing; they are forgetting that the value of anything does not depend on whether it is old or new, but on whether it is trivial or important and on whether it is false or true.

They are proposing to run American education, not on a record, but on a prospectus. They are, in fact, telling us to lose our memories and to forget what we shall forget at our peril, namely, that the past has our main lesson to teach us and that the man who does not see behind the lurid, blinding light of this world-war its deep-lying causes for decades and generations past, and on back to the origins, can not understand why this war happened, nor how to prevent its happening again, nor even what it is that is now happening. For he who does not remember what has gone before has little means of judging what is happening now or of forecasting what will come after. It is no time to forget. It is the time to remember everything and to forget nothing.

II

Listen to a voice from long ago; yet so clear and near in its tones, it seems to be speaking now. "There is, we affirm," says Plato, "an immortal conflict now going on, and calling for marvellous

vigilance. In it our allies are the gods and all good spirits." He is speaking of the age-long conflict of truth and error. It is a clarion call of ancient freedom across the centuries to us, not only to the battle line in France, but to the armies of education in America. Listen to its echoes and you shall hear the story of Marathon and Salamis, of Leonidas at Thermopylæ, of Horatius at the bridge, of Magna Charta, of the desperate siege of Leyden, of Cromwell's Ironsides, of the Declaration of Independence and of the glorious defence of Verdun. Listen and you shall hear Lincoln's answering voice: "The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth."

Let us listen again in the quiet of our schools and we shall hear the echoing thunders of the long-fought war, not ended yet, between the freedom of knowledge and the debasing slavery of ignorance. And that warfare is the one business of education, the one reason why we need schools at all. What is the past for us? It is Experience teaching—and teaching now. You recall the scene at the end of Goethe's Faust, where Faust

exclaims of the fleeting moment of his achievement—" 'Tis past." Do you also recall who it was said in reply:

> " 'Tis past? a foolish word!
> That is to say
> As it had never been."

It was the Devil.

So our struggle in the schools, as it should be in our homes, is against ignorance, the old, ancient, inveterate ignorance with which every generation is born into this world, the ignorance which must be first overcome and then enlightened by effort, hard effort, repeated effort, wisely guided effort, not alone by the exertion of the teacher, but on the part of the student as well, that our young recruits may be trained, trained, trained into an alert, disciplined, irresistible army of knowledge.

It is not an easy task, for we are wrestling not against flesh and blood, but against the unseen powers of darkness, darkness intellectual and darkness moral. It is, then, our part in the "immortal conflict," ceaseless and strenuous, "now going on and calling for marvelous vigilance" more loudly than ever. It is no place for undisciplined minds or wild theorists, still less for

idlers, slouchers and slackers, and even less for false prophets dressed up in the uniform of the army of knowledge.

III

What is the way to win? This is the question that must be answered rightly if we are to keep faith with our country. There is just one way. It is to make the proved truths of experience the one basis for our efforts and the one test of all theories offered for our acceptance. It it the test of common sense. It is also the one scientific test, for science, as Huxley put it, is nothing else than "highly trained common sense" applied to scientific questions. Let us try by this test some of the plausible assertions which are being made.

1. One is that there should be no "formal discipline" in studies. If this means that there should be no strict and regular training of the human mind, as the words naturally imply, the test is easily made. If it means something else, we have no need to consider it. All we need to do is to remember the record of facts. This record tells us that in the world's contests the undisciplined mind has generally been beaten.

It has been one of the outstanding lessons of the war, notably so in the defense of Verdun. It is notable to-day all over our land in the newly-wakened spirit of discipline, of unquestioning obedience to duty, both in military training and in civil life. Why? In order to win—so that freedom may not perish from the earth. So we may trust the war to refute the critics of "formal discipline" and to discipline them too.

2. Another assertion is that no student should be required to take any study which is not "interesting" to him, because if he does not like it, he will get little good from it. It is hard to take this seriously. What in the world is to be done, on this basis, with the many who find all studies and especially all study uninteresting? This beguiling half-truth breaks on the hard rocks of facts. For it is not a matter of guess or supposition, but of fact, that many things we have to do and know we ought to do are not pleasant in themselves. It is not "interesting" to do drudgery or to bear hunger or to keep the night-watch, chilled to the bone, in the battle-trenches. Duty is not always "interesting," but it is always duty. Life is not a series of pleasant elective choices, but

has in it the element of stern compulsion, and most of all

> When Duty whispers low, Thou must,

And it is another fact, not fancy, that obedience to duty, however hard and distasteful at first, yields a most "interesting" joy of human life, the joy of the hard-won fight, and leads to the highest freedom, the freedom of assured self-conquest. Is there anything our country needs more?

3. Some are telling us that vocational and technical education is the one thing needful, because every one should be taught to earn his living. So he should. And nine-tenths of our youth must begin to earn their living early. We grant it. But this utilitarian proposal errs in forgetting some hard facts. For if this is practically all our youth are to have, then most of them are condemned in advance to a form of industrial slavery, because they would thus be trained to be little more than animate tools for special tasks and would be largely cut off from their just chance to rise. This view overlooks the fact they are more than animate tools. They are human beings, our brothers and sisters, with minds and

hearts as well as hands. If in our just desire to prepare them for making their living we also unjustly fail to prepare them by good general schooling to make their lives better worth living, we shall create a huge proletariat of discontent to curse us, a grave menace to themselves and to the safety of our democracy.

4. One more theory needs notice. It is that we are an independent nation living in the twentieth century and should therefore have a purely American national education without reference to the past. I know no loyal American who wants anything else than that our national history should be well studied by every boy and girl in the land and that English shall be the only language used in our elementary schools. Is this all there is in the proposal? Then we can all accept it with enthusiasm. But it needs definition. For we have the right to ask whether it is meant that all elementary studies are to be exclusively national. Is geography to be confined to the geography of our land? How about arithmetic? Is there an American multiplication table? And what of "nature study"? Are only American animals to be noticed? Here is where the theory begins to crack. Our own language and history for

the sake of our national unity? Yes, in plenty, and then also the elements of universal knowledge—as much as we can get.

Above the elementary education the theory utterly fails, and fails because its advocates forget or ignore the hard facts of history. We are part of the family of nations and heir to a great part of the world's heritage of freedom. They are forgetting that the struggle now in progress against an exclusive nationalism in culture is being conducted by the allied freedom of the world. They are forgetting that an exclusively American culture must tend either to absorb other systems by incorporation or domination or, failing in that, to impair the vital unity of our international civilized freedom.

It is curious, but not strange, that this question hinges so largely on the studies of language and history. The theory of a self-centered exclusive national culture inevitably leads to disparagement of foreign languages and foreign history, and especially of ancient history and the classics. This nationalistic theory, however, has a powerful ally. Here are his words from the famous address of December 17, 1890:

Whoever has been through the gymnasium and has gone behind the scenes, knows where the trouble is. The trouble is, first of all, that we lack a truly national basis. We must take German as the foundation of the gymnasium, we must educate national young Germans and not young Greeks and Romans. We must depart from the basis which has stood for centuries, the old monastic education of the Middle Ages, in which Latin was the standard, and a little Greek. This is no longer the standard; we must make German the basis.

This is the Kaiser's own statement, the avowed basis of his whole educational policy, the theory which has been at work wrecking German education for the last thirty years. Note in passing the reference to the "old monastic education." He knew, as everyone here knows, that this did not exist in the modern Gymnasium. Thus his exclusive Kultur excluded a truthful statement of historic fact. Do we want it, or anything like it? Not so long as the tree is judged by its fruit. Not so long as we have memories to remember what that Kultur has done. It is well we should also hear a statement on the other side, made September 10, 1915, by the Minister of Public Instruction of the French Republic: "The classical culture should remain the object of our ardent study, even if it were only for the reason

that it has transmitted to French thought the greater part of the great ideas for which we are now fighting."

It is not a little question. It is this: Shall the native tongues and literatures of ancient freedom, ancestral to our own, be abandoned? The Kaiser says Yes. France says No. There they stand. We too must stand on one side or the other. There is no escape except to hide in a paltering "neutrality." There is no "negotiated peace" here. There is no third theory to choose—nothing but a set of compromising, pitiable makeshifts. One of the two rivals must win and the other go under. Which shall it be?

IV

It is great to be a true American; it is greater to be a true man or woman here or anywhere. "That all men everywhere may be free" was Lincoln's prayer. Can we not lay aside all prejudice and then read our lesson in the fiery light around us? That lesson is that no freedom is won or held without struggle and without self denial. That lesson is that mental and moral freedom is not won or held by any human being in any land without whole-minded training in the

fundametals of knowledge, be they pleasant or unpleasant at first, whole-souled obedience to duty, "interesting" or uninteresting, and whole-hearted devotion to the truth won and held by hard effort, not for money, place or power, but for the sake of living decently in a decent world, made fit to be free.

In our education, as in the war, the "immortal conflict" is now on. In both the same cause is working. And in both may God defend the right!

FRANCE AND THE CLASSICS

FRANCE AND THE CLASSICS

[A French officer, visiting the United States during the war, was asked what France was fighting for. He answered: "*Pour humanité et les humanités.*" What he expressed with such graphic brevity was the spirit of France in education, the spirit of humane civilization as opposed to the spirit of gross and brutal materialism.

A remarkable utterance of the same spirit is found in the address printed below. A few days before Foch started his greater counter-offensive in July, when France was still at bay—with the Germans so close to Paris—the Minister of Public Instruction, the highest officer of education in the French Republic, spoke at the University of Montpellier to a class of young graduates of the Lycée on the spirit of French higher education in the present war. The authority of the speaker, the critical time at which he spoke, and the intimate connection of his theme with our own problems make the subjoined translation of his eloquent advocacy of the classical humanities very timely and valuable reading.]

My dear friends: I feel a surprise mingled with deep emotion to find myself, after thirty years, again in the enclosure of this ancient and glorious University of Montpellier and to realize that nothing has grown old of what there was

here of permanent nature in its intellectual and moral life and of substantial character in its methods of teaching.

There is here now the same tradition, represented by other masters, of whom some are the sons of the teachers we have known formerly. Such a one is the eminent professor whom you have just heard, whose father I once more see enjoying the esteem and veneration of the pupils of our old Lycée.

With what zeal and with what talent he has defended the humanities! And in this tragic hour such defence seems an anachronism. "Why do you talk of proportion and harmony," they say, "when the world is upside down? What connection is there between classic thought, so calm and serene, and the madness of warlike preparation in which the world seems to wish to obliterate what remains of its wisdom? What connection is there especially between this purely formal culture, between these ancient languages, which assure us of the supremacy of general ideas, and the scientific modern culture which is now turned toward the most formidable military production, and which will turn to-morrow toward that industrial equipment and practical applica-

tion, which alone is capable of aiding us to maintain competition on economic ground where we will have to defend ourselves and to triumph."

Those who formulate these objections are superficial observers. They draw from certain appearances hasty conclusions which the examination of facts is far from demonstrating. Of course, the question may be raised whether or not Latin and Greek culture should continue to hold the first place in our studies. In other words, is the teaching of ancient languages to be considered as the base of every complete education, with the other studies as accessories imposed by the necessities of modern life?

With regard to this point, the conclusions of your teacher are absolutely clear: he thinks that French and foreign (modern) classic authors, even those the most imbued with antiquity, have not the same educative value as the Greek and Roman writers. Only an acquaintance with the ancient masters in their own language, only the habit of thinking in Latin and Greek, only research into ancient thought, seem to constitute the true exercise of the mind, the true method of assimilating the moral ideas and the noble sentiments which form the man truly worthy of the name.

There are, therefore, no other true humanities than those that result from the habit of thinking in Greek and Latin, in order to write better in French. And it is very evident that, in spite of the very energetic effort to modernize teaching, this positive doctrine has not been entirely abandoned. We know that the secondary education of girls—the most recent development of the State—still seeks out its way by endeavoring not to lose contact with the ancient languages, whether that be in preparing partially for the baccalaureate or by approximating a classical plan of study. We know that the same thought is making itself felt in the upper normal schools, where a modest place has just been made for the teaching of Latin. I do not say that these are solutions free from every criticism. But it is as it were a recognition that there has been a lack of our classic methods and, at the same time, a silent compliment rendered to our old humanities.

One thing remains beyond question: it is that for the formation of thought and of character, for the moral and civic education of the present age, we have to draw upon the old sources of Latin and Greek education. Your teacher has given the chief reason: Latin and Greek culture

is not an ornament or a luxury, but even among those who least realize it, it is the basis of the formation of modern intellect.

It is possible that classical education, carried to the very sources, must be reserved for the few—we may, indeed, say that with certainty. The conception of national public instruction for all children, together with a higher course purely classical intended for those pupils whom an intelligent selection designates, is not illogical. And at all events we must choose our authors and our books in order to train the citizens of a free democracy; we must at least inculcate in them the principles of reason, of clearness, of energy in action, which form the basis of the ancient literatures and which will always be the best initiation of children and of men into the harsh necessities of contemporary life.

But history testifies that these qualities are the possession of the Greeks and Romans, whose natural heirs we are—and history shows that for us they are the examples of vigor we must follow. It seems but yesterday that immortal discourse On the Crown was written, wherein Demosthenes, though conquered at Chæronea, demonstrated to an excited audience that the princi-

ples and obligations of a great people are independent of the chance fortune of battles, and that eternal duty is not always to be measured by the success of a day. After two thousand years another great Greek patriot, Venizelos, Prime Minister to a King unfaithful to the Allies, who tried to intimidate him by the thought of a possible defeat of the Entente, replied proudly before giving in his resignation, that he did not measure his support by the surety of the Allies' success. He, at least, more happy than Demosthenes, saved the honor of his country, and will be able to claim his part in the common victory for which we all pray. . . .

Let us not commit the error, in this age of science and industry, of separating the humanities from scientific study. The services they can render each other cannot be overestimated. Our greatest classic writers have also been scientists —a Pascal astonishes us by his taste for scientific precision and by his observance of proportion and harmony, as well as by his vigorous logic and intensity of feeling. So it happens that if our great scientists are immortal, it is because they have at the same time been great writers. A Claude Bernard is known by a book which en-

dures. And, without desiring to decry the scientific effort of the Germans, we can say that their diffuse researches for the purpose of enlightening human knowledge are not equal in value to the bright logic and admirable clearness which sum up and coördinate all the genius of an epoch.

The fact is that the classic culture enfolds and animates all the manifestations of our national thought and activity. It is a perpetual lesson in good sense and vigor. It teaches the love of the good, the true, the beautiful, and of progress by means of method; it applies to all effort and all work; it enhances all the acts and deeds of men by the priceless gifts of grace and harmony; it makes them valued by reason of its appreciation of dignity, and by its own self-respect as well as by the respect of others.

I know well that the world is now preoccupied with utilitarian ideas. Our universities, our scientific colleges especially, are endeavoring to put science in the service of the regions in which they are placed, and to extend themselves everywhere, according to the needs and the resources of each place, in institutes of applied art. There is thus special adaptation in each region and variety in national unity. And these are conditions

highly favorable for the contest against German methods, whose all-pervading discipline constitutes the strength of their formidable competition. But let us not lose sight of our own qualities, which make us loved for ourselves, and let us oppose to the perverse research into the enormous and the colossal that good taste and sense of proportion which are the characteristics of our genius, and which cannot be acquired by the simple effort of mere imitation.

French genius puts art in life everywhere. It gives a personal character to the most ordinary needs, to the most mechanical manual labor. There is an art of mixing mortar as well as of guiding a machine. Each one brings to the task his own manner and initiative. There is a saying that man must love his trade. It is not brutal discipline and mechanical organization which lead to that; it is individual taste and the stamp of personality on things. It is in that that we find united in the most obscure corners of workshops and fields the humanism and the manual trade that were considered opposites, while actually they lend the most admirable and happy support to each other.

"But," you may say, "war has upset this har-

mony, and we are a prey to the inevitable brutality of force." Those who endanger their lives and threaten the lives of others, have they the leisure to think of the ideal, to count the blows that they give and take, to measure the value of their military action by the beauty and holiness of their cause?"

Gentlemen, that is blasphemy against your kin, and mine, who are inscribed in the Golden Book of this University. Do you think that those of your teachers and of your great comrades who have faced death have not had two reasons for sacrificing themselves—one, patriotism, which is theirs in common with all Frenchmen; the other, an exact knowledge of the object of their sacrifice? Do you think that when death comes upon them in action, more than one does not have upon his lips some verses of Corneille he read the evening before, or the memory of a passage of Homer in which Hector, sacrificing himself to duty, and knowing that he must perish, nevertheless welcomes his destiny with pride, and resolves to die without complaint?

May I recall here the word of a man of this University, a lieutenant in the infantry, who listened one evening in the trenches to the reflec-

tions of his men? "I," said one, "fight for my fields of grain." And another, "I for my wife and children"; and another, "I for my mountains." And the officer said gravely: "I fight for La Fontaine and Molière: La Fontaine, the immortal heir of Æsop and of Phædrus; Molière, the immortal heir of Plautus and of Terence, and still further of Aristophanes and of Menander." Yes, my friends, acquaintance with art and beauty is an element of bravery in the teachers and pupils of the University. They know better than the others why they die, and if they know how to hand the torch which illumines them to the soldiers whom they lead to the assault, it is because they have before their eyes an ideal, the secret of which has been a long time revealed to them through their study of the humanities. . . .

Yes, let us keep all our advantages, and let us deny nothing of our university tradition. That is our strength for to-day and to-morrow. Let us keep our old inheritance of Gallic strength and daring, but let us not put aside the intellectual and moral discipline we owe to the ancient humanities. It is that which makes us to-day more French—that is to say, more human. It is that which has prepared us for victory by render-

ing us worthy of it. It is that which to-morrow will cause our triumph to be acclaimed by all the peoples who see in our cause that of humanity, conscious alike of its duties and its rights. It is finally that which, when beneficent peace shall reign upon the earth, will conserve to our country, loved and admired by the world, the place of honor to which its past gives it all its titles, the place it will know well how to keep in the future, the first place.

THE HUMANITIES AFTER THE WAR

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I

Napoleon wrote the epitaph of the eighteenth century, the age of artificiality. The war now ending is writing the epitaph of the nineteenth, the age of boasting. This period of vast achievement was, as Frederic Harrison described it, the age of confident self-laudation *par excellence.* With characteristic aggressiveness it pushed over a bit into the twentieth, and perhaps for its presumption has been violently stopped by a war waged with the very implements it had forged and had labelled with the stamp of Progress.

Amid its manifold activities the most vigorous intellectual impulse was science, at first mainly in the form of knowledge as such and later more notably in its myriad applications to human use. Through this practical development, which grew in strength as the century advanced, the material side of human life was enriched as never before, and science, whether pure or applied, so long as controlled for human welfare conferred enormous benefits, and if morally uncontrolled,

as of late, wrought fearful evil. In the latest perversion of its true use all the three major sciences have been dragged into the service of death. Physics, with chemistry helping, gave us the submarine assassin, chemistry the murderous gases, and biology furnished germs to poison man and beast in Roumania. Yet these things, devilish as the uses to which they were put, were not in themselves necessarily evil. Conceivably they might have been used for commendable ends; the anthrax germ as an antitoxin, the murderous gases to destroy vermin and the submarine even to transport missionaries. It is clearly seen that the imminent danger of their misuse lies, not in the nature of science, but in the motive which prompted the misuse by making such devices easily available in the hands of unscrupulous men or nations. The execration of mankind has fallen justly on those who thus misapplied applied science, and a clamorous demand is justly made that it shall henceforth be applied only to humane ends, for the reason that when applied to inhuman ends it becomes the hired accomplice of immorality. It is a dreadful fact that while the guilt of introducing this misuse in the world-war rests on Germany, the leader in applied science, our side

has been driven to use some of these agencies in retaliation. Applied science has thus freely furnished mercenaries to either side. Its devices have been for sale to any buyer. But as honor and decency are things not for sale, it is not surprising that men are now incredulous in regard to the dependability of science taken by itself, especially of applied science, as a safe moral factor in education and in the resultant civilization for which education prepares.

Is high intelligence separable from honor and decency? The Greek thinkers said No. Recent German thought says Yes.[1] There is no need to argue in this presence that although there are notable instances of high intellectuality combined with low morality and although exemption from moral restraint has been at times supposed to be a necessary condition of intellectual freedom, men of high intelligence and low morals are nevertheless dangerous to human society, persons to be watched rather than trusted, persons whose dangerousness is intensified by their degree of intelligence, and who should therefore be socially and educationally reprobated or at least

[1] For a lucid review of this question see Emile Boutroux's Oxford lecture on "The Relation between Thought and Action," Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1918.

"interned." And in this time of the world's trial there is no need to argue that governments or nations of this high-low type cannot be trusted in the family of nations. All the proof we need is to be found in the undeniable fact that when trust vanishes, civilized relations collapse. And we must have a civilization which is not collapsible. Whether or no decent morals are essential to high intellectuality is therefore a question of little importance compared with the fact that human behavior resting on decent morals is essential to the world's safety.

Can education in science, considered by itself alone, and especially in applied science, be surely depended on to foster this humane behavior in men and to ground it, not on considerations of mere convention or expediency, but on honor and decency? The war has answered this momentous question in the negative. While not at all a condemnation of science, but of its abuses in application, it is nevertheless a demand that in all its uses it shall henceforth stand always as the ally and never as the enemy of man's moral welfare.

There is some hard travelling to do before this end is reached. To begin with, science will need to be taught purely as science, without admixture

of other things. Otherwise its true nature is obscured and men will be misled as to its meaning. For example, applied science has lately been entangled at times in serving sordid purposes, so that its own freedom as science has been hampered and its beneficial influence impaired. To make industrial processes scientific is a most worthy end, but to commercialize science is to degrade it. The two have not always been distinguished. They must be distinguished if applied science is to be the best applied science or is to remain science at all.

Pure science also has been at times entangled in extraneous things. Take an example from biology. "The strong must survive," "the weak must perish," "it is the law of life," "Nature heads up things in an autocratic way," "war is a normal condition for a nation seeking to realize its own life," "war is a biological necessity,"—such are the utterances of recent German thinkers. But this is not biology proper. It is biology infected by a delusive theory of human society and leaping to the inference that the law of the jungle is of course the law of the home, the community and the state. It is one of the main causes which has provoked the extreme and angry answer of social-

ism. For biology, then, as pure biology and the mother-science of medicine, the champion of the weak, serving humane ends and itself uncontaminated by any infection, a broad road is open to endless beneficient progress. But if that road is missed, some devious way must be travelled.

Given, then, science as science, true to its own standards, debased by no sordid use and mingled with no alien substance, its real function as an educational subject of immense value becomes clearer. It is to acquaint Man with the truths of Nature and the beneficent uses these truths may serve. It thus becomes a question of high importance as to how education in science, especially in the earlier formative stages, may remain purely scientific and may at the same time help in developing its students humanely and morally. This importance becomes clearer, both because of certain considerations external to science and because the chief object in the earlier formative teaching is not the development of science, but the development of the student. The other comes later. It is not too much to assert that when science is first studied by these younger students, not as the analysis of developed modern results nor for immediate practical use, but

as the historical panorama which shows definitely the successive stages of its development by human discoverers who were benefactors and even martyrs and heroes of mankind, it is science thus studied which is most likely to show them how science actually came to be what it is, to yield knowledge in vital form (so to speak, in a "nascent state"), to waken livelier interest, to show its importance as a part of human experience, and to reveal its grandeur as an ever-growing power for human welfare. If our youth start in science the other way, the humanizing and moralizing value is apt to seem remote, intangible and even unreal, and the importance of guiding all scientific applications toward beneficent ends is not so likely to be suggested, much less to be obviously implied.

Take another point. To put the right thought in the right words is admittedly a mark of the best teaching. So long as language is the one general instrument of thought, as it has been since civilization began and promises to be so long as civilization lasts, its necessity in teaching science and everything else is self-evident.. In view of this it is appalling that many of our teachers, some of them in universities, are in a sense illiter-

ate. They cannot use language well and therefore lose power to teach adequately either in the class room or in their writings. Specialization without a good literary training has more and more restricted them in power to say well what they think. Lacking literary vision or assured mastery of English, they are forced to talk almost entirely in the dialect of their specialties. Anyone who is acquainted with our doctoral theses, especially in applied science, knows how serious this illiteracy is. And it is utterly foreign to the nature of science. Of course the needed technical terms must be used to tell what only technical terms can state. But this should be the limit of such usage. It has been fearfully overdone. If it sufficed a Newton to define the atom as "the least part of matter" (whether rightly or wrongly is of no consequence here), our writers may well follow his lead and use plain English for all plain English will say. It will add to their ease, freedom and human tone, besides making their statements less involved and more attractive. Their writings will then have a better chance to be read.

II

What has all this to do with the educational future of the humanities in our land after the war? Much in every way. I have taken the instance of science because it is so conspicuous just now, because it is so important and because there are many who feel that a training in science, especially in applied science, is a sufficient basis, perhaps even the main basis for our coming education. I have tried to show that science does better as a humanizing and moralizing force in education when it uses the helps of history, language and literature in order to make its appeal to young students more fully human, and that without these valuable contacts it loses much of its persuasiveness in teaching and the vivid sense of its neighborhood to other fields of knowledge.

What of our coming education in the humanities themselves? and especially in language, the instrument of man's thought, in literature, the mirror of his moods, and in history, the record of his deeds. They, too, will need to be resolutely true to their own function, which is to acquaint Man with himself and with all the benefits this acquaintance brings. Some think it is

a useless training, something intangible and unpractical, or at best a pleasant accomplishment rather than a solid attainment. Yes, it is intangible in a way, yet not more intangible than the sense of justice, truth or freedom. And it is perhaps unpractical for many of the quick and obvious utilities. But what of the greater utilities? Was it "useful" to the world in this war that the swiftest voluntary response to the first call of freedom came from the colleges and notably from the older homes of humanistic studies? Some may have thought these playful, carefree fellows did not know very well how to live, but at least they have shown that they knew how to die. Their education, science included and the old humanities included too, and not some military or technical training, is what their letters told us was a preparation which stood them in good stead. Has the war given us any reason to doubt the worth of their training? Has it not rather emphasized it? The example of such men indicates anew that the value of the humanities, like the true value of science, is to be tested by their fidelity to their proper function and by their wholesome results in human life.

As for our own language, it seems needless to

say it should be well understood and well used as our chief instrument of thought. The war properly adds the demand that it shall be the sole language in our primary schools, and shall thus become a stronger unifying force in our nation and a stronger bond of union with the whole English-speaking world. The better unification of English itself would be another great help to this end. And if it is impossible or for any reason inadvisable to obliterate regional or social variations, at least those who call themselves educated could strive to lesson the difference in their own usage and thus gradually establish a better common standard. For if educated English speech, here and the world over, shall become very nearly one, its influence will spread widely through the thousand utterances of voice and print, and good English may yet become the common English of the world.

How shall this be promoted in the schools? Some say "By studying English alone." There are cases where this result has happened. But they are few in number and prove nothing for the mass of students. The fact that a boy does not or will not study a foreign tongue does not prove him another Lincoln. The war does not

alter this. Nor has school-study of modern languages coördinate to our own produced an appreciably better use of English. It has oftener disfigured English with strange locutions. The war has not helped to remove this difficulty. The fact that these highly important modern tongues are coördinate and not fundamental to our own is the important persistent fact which cannot be ignored in this connection. Brothers and sisters do not get their fundamental traits from each other, but from their common ancestors. We need not, then, be surprised that the teachers of English and of modern languages constantly assure us that the best way is to study the classics. Our latest school and college records confirm this as a fact, a fact no more likely to be changed by the war than the fact that mathematics is a fine preparation for physics and history a fine preparation for political science. In regard to the modern languages themselves, there is a marked change due to the war. The available facts indicate that German has lost fully three-fourths of its students, French has gained strongly and Spanish substantially. That America will prefer French, as she has preferred France, may be expected. It is not likely that German, which

had been artificially stimulated anyway, will fully regain its former importance. It is too early to say whether the large gain in Spanish will last or will increase much more. Of the classical languages Greek is gaining a little here and there and Latin is gaining considerably. The main trend is toward the closely related Latin, French and Spanish—to name them in the order of their total enrolments. It should not be forgotten that Latin actually has more students than are found in all the foreign modern languages, and that this leading position is being strengthened by gains made since the war began.

The war has also called new attention to the classics as the fundamental linguistic and literary bond of Western civilization. The continued effort of the Kaiser throughout his reign, now closed, to hack and hew this old bond in the interest of a nationalistic Kultur released from international ties has been the most marked feature of his educational Thirty Years' War. This war also reveals France as standing against him in this. The stirring address of Lafferre,[2] Minister of Public Instruction, delivered at Montpel-

[2] Translated in the *New York Evening Post* of September 21, 1918. See page 87.

lier a few days before Foch launched his counter-offensive, shows how ardently France cares for the old humanities, and all the more when the Germans are close to Paris. The situation reveals two warring tendencies; intolerant nationalistic unity and tolerant international community. Whichever of these is best for the world will naturally be best for our coming education. Is there any good reason why America should not stand here with France? and with England? and with all who believe in an educational League of Nations to uphold humane studies? With the persistence of separate languages and nationalities, and the addition of new nations, all needing strong common bonds, the need for a common humanistic element of union will increase.

A word is in place here as to the need of teaching literature as literature, not as anything else, and of teaching it humanely and nobly. Thus in teaching an author the real object is to introduce the student to the author. If anything pedantic, mechanical or extraneous interferes with this, the student is ill-taught. If taught as "the criticism of life" (only one of its phases), it degenerates into cheap philosophizing, whereas when viewed as the picture of life, it has a chance to reveal all

its values. When infected with the germs of social decadence, it becames poisonous. Our literature, thanks to the war, is now somewhat cleansed. A lot of bad books are suddenly out of date. The finer aspects of life, now vividly in view, suggest that a better understanding of the nature of literature is desirable. The demand is heard that oddity or caprice shall no longer be taken as evidence of genius, that literature shall bear a nobler aspect and that the "golden mean" of the masters in expression shall again be the Golden Rule for style. It may even happen that Plato's canon of the true, the beautiful and the good will again become the canon of letters and of art also. If so, a better age is dawning. It is devoutly to be hoped that our schools will be conducted in this spirit, and down to the last details, so that, for instance, even our school readers shall generally be worth reading.

Our third study is history, a momentous subject by itself and more so now because of the flat contradictions we have met in regard to recent events of the first importance. History is the recorded memory of mankind. It is Experience teaching—and teaching now. What our own memory means to us, history means to the civi-

lized world. It is still true after the war, as before it, that a boy without a memory cannot be educated. It is hard to believe any school-study is of greater consequence. If the war teaches us anything about historical teaching, it teaches that we need to know the record of what has happened. We must therefore, first of all, learn history as history, not as politics, not as philosophy, and not as science. If the accounts are in conflict or are otherwise unreliable, we must know what the existing accounts are before we can judge them. Their value to the young student therefore lies in allowing him to read the story of the past as the writers told it and not as altered by editors. Such records, with the originals unaltered, in spirit at least, when summarized in text books, compends and compilations, are the only safe provisional basis for later judgment. The necessity for this is forced upon us by the fact that history has been falsified at times by writers who are so anxious to "see things as they are" that they cannot see things as they were. This is not the limit of the evil, because some of them unconsciously or consciously see the past mainly in the light of the present and as colored by their own prepossessions. This has been notorious for the last generation in Germany. So let the new

"science of ancient history," made in Germany, furnish us an example. In his *Vergangenheit und Gegenwart,* published the year before the war, Wendland thus explains what Philip of Macedan did to Greek democracy:

"It is now common knowledge how Philip consolidated his state, kept his dangerous northern neighbors in their proper territorial limits, created a citizen army of his people and an officers' corps of the nobility. . . . The temperate and careful character of Philip's dealing with the Athenian Demos shows that he pursued no ruthless policy of aggrandizement. . . . This serves admirably the purpose of training one in political thinking, helps to guard one against the influences of trivial talk about morality and politics, and makes one realize that such a conflict cannot be settled by international arbitration. It should be emphasized that Demosthenes was actuated in his condemnation of the enemy by motives of patriotic hate. Furthermore one should strongly emphasize the superior merits of a thorough system of monarchical government and of military discipline."[3]

[3] See Professor Knipfing's article on "The War and The Teaching of Ancient History," pp. 801-802, *Ohio Teachers' Journal,* March, 1918.

There is more; but this is enough. And this "thinly disguised eulogy" of Prussian imperialism is put forth as history! For "Philip" read "Wilhelm" and for the "Athenian Demos" read "France." What more cogent reason could we have for insisting that in our education the records of history should be allowed to speak for themselves and that no one who falsifies their meaning shall be known as a historian? Is it "trivial" to talk of morality in connection with politics? So this writer thinks, and thus reinforces our conviction that the teaching of history, like the teaching of anything else, when it fails to respect moral standards is dangerous to civilization and fails to give assurance that it is genuine history.

III

Language, literature and history—the three primary humanities in education and the source from which the other humanities spring. Science also, using their light as a help in teaching, finds its own distinctive truths more readily understood and exerts fuller moral power without losing a particle of its scientific integrity. There is one more of the humanities;—behind them all and

connecting them all, the study Aristotle called "the only liberal science"[4]—philosophy. Here again the war has opened a new volume. The divorce of thought and action, and the cynical atheism built thereon, we may now hope will be regarded not only as immoral, but as irrational. If so, philosophy will again become a great blending power in our university studies.

In conclusion, then, does not the war teach clearly that education in the humanities, when true to its own type, is an integral part of the history of human freedom? Wherever they have been mechanized, their spirit has been cramped. The classical education of Germany was rigorously thorough. Yet it often missed something which enlightened the schools of France, Great Britain and America. That something is what makes the difference between mechanical precision and the joy of life. A plant pressed in a herbarium may keep its outline, but it will not live. The indestructible value of the classics for American schools and colleges is not as science, but as humanism.

There is no time here to go into the vital question of what shall guarantee the nobility of our

[4] Metaphysics, I 2.

teaching by making primal moral truth the basis on which it shall rest. Science and the humanities and philosophy, truly taught, are certain to suggest this guarantee, but are not enough to secure it. They may be made a help toward virtue, but they are not virtue. They may also be misused for inhuman ends. Is any lesson of the war clearer? Will democracy of itself secure it? It may help—but will it help enough? There were old democracies, sometimes noble, sometimes cruel as autocracies. The Athenian treatment of Melos was like the German treatment of Belgium.[5] And what of Russian democracy now? Will it tame the wild beast in man? Will vocational studies suffice to save us? Some seem to think so. Yet they overlook the plain fact that to send our youth into vocational studies alone is to cut them off from their just chance for knowledge, to condemn them in advance to industrial serfdom and to create a huge proletariat of discontent. Will the newer psychology help us with its insistence that mental discipline is absurd and injurious and that no student should have to study a subject he finds "uninteresting"? Will this enfeebling sentimental theory be use-

[5] Thucydides, V 84-112.

ful in the moral crises of life "when Duty whispers low, Thou must"? Will money, place and power, held up as goals of education and consequent goals of social endeavor, help us? The war has wrecked such theories. What else is left but the Golden Rule of Christ?

VOCATIONAL AND GENERAL EDUCATION

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I

As war is an abnormal and peace the normal condition of civilized man, the end of the world-war brings us face to face with the problem of resuming our education on normal lines with as much added wisdom as the recent experience of war has given us. Whatever was really true in education before the war, whether perceived fully or not, is true now, with the difference that the war, notwithstanding all its confusion, has given us a chance to perceive truth in the light of new experience. We should therefore pay little heed to the voices of confusion telling us that everything has changed and that nothing in education will hereafter be the same as before; nor should we listen to the voices of stolid indifference telling us that everything in education will be the same as before.

Neither of these statements can be trusted, and it is our task to find out clearly and promptly what it is that is changing and what is not chang-

ing. We must have something on which we can depend to keep our vision and our plans clear and steady. Like a wise pilot in an aeroplane, we shall therefore need to know not only that our machine will fly but that it is safely stabilized for flight, so that we may know how to move to our objective without disaster to our machine or ourselves. It may be easier to fly than to steer, but just now steady steering is more needed in our education than is enthusiastic flying. It is time for cool heads and trained common sense. Otherwise the confusion around us will bewilder men and make them lose confidence in education. Spinoza said that in studying any problem in order to get at the truth it was man's duty "not to deplore and not to denounce, but to understand,"—not to be carried away by emotional prejudices, not to shed heat but light on any problem. If we add to this the unshaken purpose of viewing education as a whole and also in the relation of its parts to the whole and to each other, it then becomes possible to see clearly how our entire education in all its parts may be planned on the best basis for the future.

There is no time here to argue in detail as to what things are changing or into what they are

changing, or as to what things are not changing. We may, however assert with some confidence that the laws of nature and of human nature remain as they were before the war. The war has not repealed the law of gravitation, the procession of the seasons or the continual sequence of day and night. It has not changed the law of the mind. Yet though it has not changed our nature, it is changing our attitude from one of acquiescence in the easy-going view of life into something more noble. The new force evoked by the war is the newly quickened sense of discipline and duty. If it pervades our land, it will save and strengthen our education for centuries. But many men have short memories and easily forget what we supposed they had learned. The war once over, it is to many something to be forgotten as soon as possible. Therefore the new impulse must be used while it is still vivid, if it is to be used successfully as the regenerating force for all our education from bottom to top. It should be recognized and embodied in every course of study and in every act of teaching and learning. This is the way to save its full power for the future. To do so will add untold gain in moral and material wealth to our nation. Not to do so

will be to miss the greatest chance we may ever hope to have. Never before has so heavy a burden of responsibility been laid on those in charge of our education.

II

Our education follows two leading aims and therefore has two main divisions, education for knowledge and education for action. The first aims primarily to train the individual to the best intelligence. The second aims primarily to train the individual to the best practice of his occupation. The aim of the first is universal, and its range is limited only by the capacity of the individual. The aim of the second is particular, and its range is limited both by the capacity of the individual and the character of his intended occupation. The first is called general or, in its higher levels, liberal education. The second is called vocational or, in its higher levels, technical or professional education. Though each in some degree shares in the aim of the other, the primary aim of the first is to know and of the second is to do. Each is necessary to the welfare of the other, and both are therefore necessary in our system of education.

The general education has its three successive levels,—primary, secondary and higher, and the vocational education is also gradually differentiating, with some overlappings, into three successive levels of vocational, technical and professional, which as yet only partly correspond to the three levels of general education. It is not to be expected that they will ever closely correspond with and emerge from the three levels of general education, but it is likely that they will do so to a greater extent than heretofore. All these, when placed in rational relation to each other, form a complete, harmonious, mutually supporting system of education, to which all other extraneous forms are related as derivatives or combinations. It is only when their true relation is disregarded that friction and consequent antagonism arise. To organize and administer both the general and vocational divisions and main subdivisions in their true relation is now the largest and most pressing task we have to perform. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of doing it promptly and thoroughly. The interests at stake are priceless. Delay adds to our dangers. Error here is fundamental and multiplies itself a thousand fold, with consequent

waste of money, friction in operation, failure in teaching and discouragement in learning.

III

Nine-tenths of our boys and girls must start early to earn their living. They should therefore have the opportunity for enough vocational training to prepare them for their purpose. This, it seems to me, is the solid truth on which vocational training rests. It would be foolish to deny it. But, like some other truths, it is not all the truth. Nine-tenths of our boys and girls, yes, ten-tenths, are human beings with minds and hearts as well as hands. Whenever any of them must begin to prepare directly to earn a living, they should have the chance for good vocational training of course. Is this all they are to have? Will their vocational training be injured if they also have as much good general education as they have the chance to take? Will it not rather help their vocational studies? In fact, will not many of them do better on the basis of general education alone? Practical results seem to prove this. Just as surely as general knowledge is the best preparation for acquiring particular knowledge or skill, so surely their general education, even though scanty, will

be a help in vocational education and in vocational labor. Owing to our present imperfect coordination of the two, much friction arises. But this should and can be largely remedied. Meanwhile we may rest assured that good general schooling is a great help in all practical studies.

There is a more serious aspect of the question. If nine-tenths of our youth are to get nothing or little more than vocational studies, they are cut off from their just chance for as much general education as they can take, and are thereby largely cut off from their just chance to rise by means of the help this broader education would give them. They are condemned in advance to industrial serfdom and are on the way to form a huge proletariat of discontent, the gravest menace our democracy can encounter. They have the same right to a square deal as any other Americans, even if they do not happen to have the same abilities or home advantages. Equal educational opportunity for all who can take it is their right. To do anything to reduce that opportunity is to deprive them of part of their rights. I am not a socialist and yet I think the socialists are right in their demand that equality of provision for the best general education should be available for

every boy and girl in the land who can take it, and that nothing in our education should look toward ecenomic slavery. Do we want a race of serfs and peasants in our land? If we do, a sure means to this end is to reduce the chances for general education.

The greatest peril to which our education is now exposed is the progressive reduction and deterioration of general education, the birthright of every American youth, through the intolerant encroachment of so-called "practical" studies. The demand that everyone should have a good chance to be trained to make a living is just. But so long as "the life is more than the meat," so long will making a good life be greater than making a good living. Man cannot live without bread, but "man shall not live by bread alone." Owing to our strong practical instincts and the material needs of our life, there is no danger that vocational studies of all grades, from elementary to highest, will lack support. They will get it. But we are now facing the disintegration of our general education. It simply cannot live if it is to be put in unrestrained hostile rivalry with "practical" studies. Some may ask whether it is worth maintaining. The answer is very easy. It

is supremely worth maintaining because it is essential to general intelligence, because it is the one sure guarantee that all applied or practical studies will be steadied by true standards of knowledge, because it is the one sure means of opening the way of highest opportunity to all our youth who can make the journey, and because it is the best practical safeguard of our democratic freedom. It is always harder to save the invisible than the visible things; but the invisible things, like truth and freedom, are what make human life worth living. What greater duty, then, rests upon all who care for education than to end the antagonism between vocational and general education by placing them in their true and beneficial relation of mutual support.

These remarks indicate some of the perils of severing vocational from general education. If, then, they should not be severed, except when it is necessary to begin vocational studies in order to make a living, how ought they to be related? The question is not easy to answer off-hand nor in brief fashion. Before a definitely practical answer can be given, there must be a closer agreement as to what we mean by vocational and general education and a better application of the

agreement in practice. There is not yet a sufficient working agreement, so far as I am aware, on these highly important points. Nevertheless. some points are clear; enough to make plain what these two types of education ought to be and may become.

First of all, the general education, because of its universality of aim and spirit must be the one and only foundation for all our education. Take, for example, our primary schools. Here all the youth of our nation receive or should receive their first elements of general knowledge,—our national language, our national history and other studies. The secondary and higher general education should rise on this base and be developed securely, definitely and to their fullest extent. Second, the vocational education should always presuppose as much general education as will not curtail the time necessary for proper vocational training. In the same way the technical and professional education should rest on a still more extensive basis of general education. Thus, in brief, the vocational and general education at every stage are most harmoniously related to each other when the vocational training, intended for a definite particular end in each case, emerges

from and rests upon as large an amount of general education as is practicable to obtain. In this way the general precedes and prepares for the special education and the special education emerges from, rests on and benefits by the general ability developed through the general education. Each thus helps the other. If these considerations are sound, it is clear that we have a great deal to do before the happy result can be accomplished. Our general education must be rigorously simplified and centered in the few studies which experience shows are of most fundamental value for the development of all-round intelligence. The students in school and college will need to learn that there is no education for them without their own active and regular exertion in study. The newly wakened sense of discipline and duty must be their powerful helper here, as it must be for all of us who teach. Given a simpler course of general education, based on a few required fundamental studies well and amply taught, as well as diligently studied, the problem of our general education is solved. It will also be put in a position to furnish something more definite and dependable at each stage as a preparation for vocational, technical and profes-

sional courses. The vocational experts must settle what actually constitutes good vocational training of each kind. So far as I know, a common agreement has not yet been reached. It is imperative that such an agreement should be reached and reached soon. Of one thing we may be sure, namely, that unless these studies are planned so as to allow as much general education as is practicable and to arrange vocational studies so that they emerge from general education, instead of supplanting it, the present danger both to general and vocational education will increase.

I do not here enter into such important questions as the relation of the workshop to the school or the modes of vocational teaching, whether from example to rule or from rule to example, or on anything else of vocational technique. But I do urge on all friends of education the vital importance of using the new-born sense of discipline and duty as the impulse which must save all our schools of every sort. Why listen to the nonsense that mental discipline is absurd and injurious? I know some psychologists—not all psychologists—hold that we know nothing of the mind or even know that we have a mind, and that all we know

is "animal behavior." Even if this were so, would it not be well that we animals should be trained to behave as well as possible? And why listen to the nonsense that no student should have to study any subject he finds "uninteresting"? Here the truth that every study should be so taught that the student shall see its value is perverted into the untruth that no study should be taught before the student sees its value. The answer to such theories is written in the world's history. The undisciplined mind has generally been beaten. The master key to success in studies, general or vocational, as to success in life, is hard work, steady work, honest work, intelligent work.

I have said our two-fold division of education rests on training for knowledge and training for action. There is a third term of human life behind knowledge and action,—the primal impulse of both. Some call it Feeling. Some call it Heart. If we once get hold of this motive in students and teachers, we shall find the force which, acting with friendliness, consideration and sympathy, will show us the way to teach any study and also to maintain our general education in its full integrity and to unite both general and vocational education in one mutually supporting system.

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